

## Letter from Mabel Hubbard Bell to Alexander Graham Bell, November 8, 1909, with transcript

Letter from Mrs. Alexander Graham Bell to Dr. Alexander Graham Bell. Twin Oaks, Washington, D. C. November 8, 1909. My darling Alec:

Here I am all alone in Twin Oaks and happier here than I could be anywhere else just now. I do not think any house will ever affect me so strongly as this one does, it is so instinct with Mamma's personality and she was so fond of every one of her things. I feel her presence here, every one thing is a part of her, the result of her thought and labor. I have many memories of talking them over with her, and I wish the place could be kept just as it is in Grace's loving care. I want now to know that many of the things are mine, but I would rather leave most of them here that the home shall continue a memory of her.

We have had very hard moments to live through, but we have so far gone through with I think increased affection for and confidence in each other and I think this very beautiful and as fine a testimony to my mother, any mother as could be rendered.

The silver here has been parted, this is all the division actually made so far, but I think we have agreed as to the principles which are to guide us in the further distribution. Gipsey had the feeling that Grace and I and even Helen had already received more of the furniture than she, but since I told her of the circumstances through which she got her fortune, that Papa gave her mother a hundred shares of Telephone when they were not worth the paper they were written on, but afterwards increased in value out of all 2 proportion to what he could have given his other daughters and the fact that he had to buy in her property twice over, she brightened up instantly like the generous-hearted child she is and said she was perfectly satisfied and it did seem as if she had had more than her share already. So that smoothes out the worst tangle.

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It is lovely here, so quiet and peaceful. The servants are working, putting the house in order to close for the winter, but they are working out of sight. Outwardly all is going on as usual. Everything is as Mamma left it and I am so glad I can have these last few hours while I feel as if she were not out of the room. Nothing demands her immediate presence now, but there was such a sense of emptiness and want yesterday in the crowd when she wasn't there to join in and presently to walk homeward with, and later when the discussion of Cook and Peary threatened to wax hot between Bert and Elsie and Gipse. I miss her, not now when she might naturally be somewhere else in the house, but in the afternoons when we would all gather and when I want sympathy, advise and yes, pride in me. Nobody was as proud of me as she was, nobody else ever made the most of any bright little thing I ever said or did and it is only growing more and more strange to have to do without that underlying sense of her love of and pride in me which has lain deep down at the bottom of my heart and comforted me in my moments of deepest depression. "Mamma would see, Mamma would care," and it didn't matter that she really neither knew or cared. I had but to tell her to get all the sympathy and understanding I wanted.

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You are awfully good to me, my husband, and so are my children, but there isn't the same quality in the best love of husband or children. It is strange to try and realize that I am the eldest now and that it is I who should succeed to her leadership if I had it in me to do so and no one realizes more keenly than I that I can not do it, but I am going to try and at all events one can "hitch one's wagon to a star."

(Few lines scratched out.)

Much love to you and all. I couldn't write before, there was so much to live through.

Your loving Mabel.